

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims, shown in a complete listing thereof, as follows:

Claims 1-7 (*Canceled*)

Claim 8. (New) A cross-country ski system comprising:

a cross-country ski comprising a central zone adapted to receive a device for binding a boot to the ski;

the central zone of the ski comprising a binding zone having a location for receiving the binding device and an upper support surface of the ski;

the upper support surface of the ski being arranged on a least one of two lateral sides of the location to receive the binding device, the upper support surface being capable of coming in direct contact with the boot when a skier using the cross-country ski system exerts a pressure force;

the location for receiving the binding device comprises an upwardly facing recess of the upper surface of the ski.

Claim 9. (New) A cross-country ski system according to claim 8, wherein:

in the central zone of the ski, at least one lateral shoulder arranged on one of the two lateral sides of the location for receiving the binding device such that the boot can be supported directly on the shoulder.

Claim 10. (*New*) A cross-country ski system according to claim 8, wherein:

the ski comprises two lateral upper surfaces arranged on respective lateral sides of the location for receiving the binding device.

Claim 11. (*New*) A cross-country ski system according to claim 9, wherein:

the shoulder comprises a support surface for the boot arranged above the upper surface of the location for receiving the binding device.

Claim 12. (*New*) A cross-country ski system according to claim 8, wherein:

the upper support surface of the ski is longitudinally arranged in an area corresponding to a metatarsophalangeal bending zone of a user's foot.

Claim 13. (*New*) A cross-country ski system according to claim 8, further comprising:

a binding device adapted to be fixed on the ski in the location for receiving the binding device.

Claim 14. (*New*) A cross-country ski system according to claim 13, wherein:

the binding device has, at least in the area of the support surface, a lesser width than a width of the ski.

Claim 15. (New) A cross-country ski system according to claim 13, wherein:

the binding device is adapted to be fitted within the recess of the upper surface of the ski;

the binding device has a rib adapted to be positioned within a downwardly facing longitudinal recess in a sole of the boot;

the binding device including no baseplate to be mounted upon the ski, so that a lower external surface of the boot is adapted to be directly supported on the upper support surface of the ski.

Claim 16. (New) A cross-country ski system according to claim 8, wherein:

the ski has, at least in part of the central zone, an upper surface, the transverse width of said upper surface being greater than a width of the lower gliding surface of the ski.